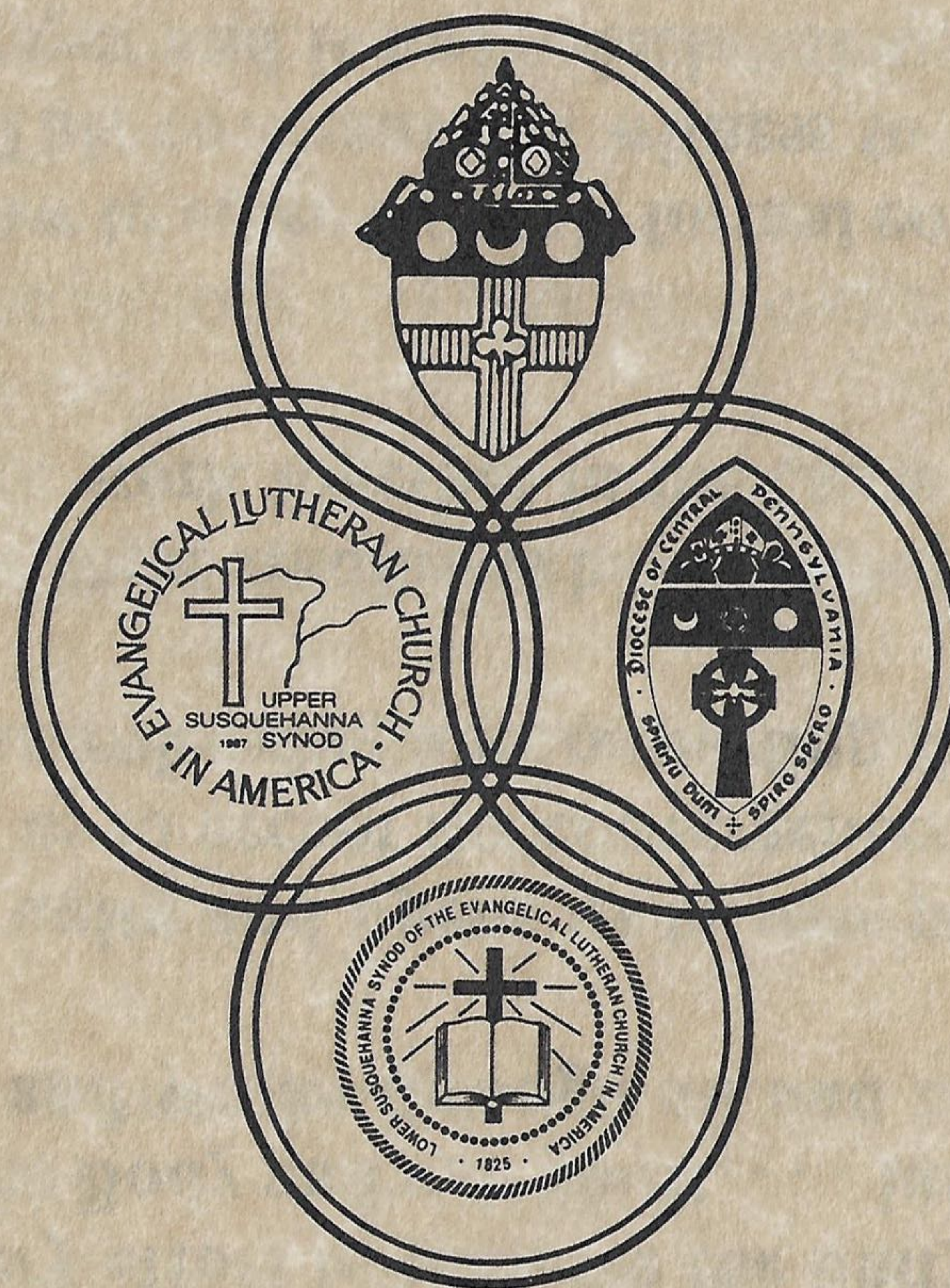




A COVENANT

AMONG

The Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania
The Lower Susquehanna Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
The Roman Catholic Diocese of Harrisburg
The Upper Susquehanna Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

**A Covenant
Among
The Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania
The Lower Susquehanna Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
The Roman Catholic Diocese of Harrisburg
The Upper Susquehanna Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

Our Lord Jesus Christ wills the unity of his church. On the night of his Last Supper, our Lord prayed: “. . . that they may all be one. Father! May they be in us, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they be one, so that the world will believe that you sent me. I gave them the same glory you gave me, so that they may be one, just as you and I are one: I in them and you in me, so that they may be completely one, in order that the world may know that you sent me and that you love them as you love me.” (John 17:21-23)

Together all Christians are to “make every effort to preserve the unity which has the Spirit as its origin and peace as its binding force” because: “There is but one Body and one Spirit, . . . just as there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all, and works through all and is in all.” (Ephesians 4:4-6)

We affirm that the Holy Spirit bestows unity and opens us to new possibilities to provide an effective expression of God’s love in Christ. The same Spirit calls us to accept the convergences already achieved among us and work toward the goal of unity willed by Christ, while acknowledging and respecting the doctrinal differences among us.

Impelled by the Spirit, the bishops of our three traditions have convened annual days of dialogue among our clergy and laity and have encouraged our parishes to work together in the cause of Christian unity. Indeed, a long history of cooperation exists among us.

We believe that the same Spirit calls us now to enter into this formal covenant as a sign of our increased commitment to the unity of the whole Christian church. This covenant is a witness to the one Spirit who will lead all Christians to the fulfillment of our Lord’s high priestly prayer and is not a declaration of an exclusive relationship among our three traditions.

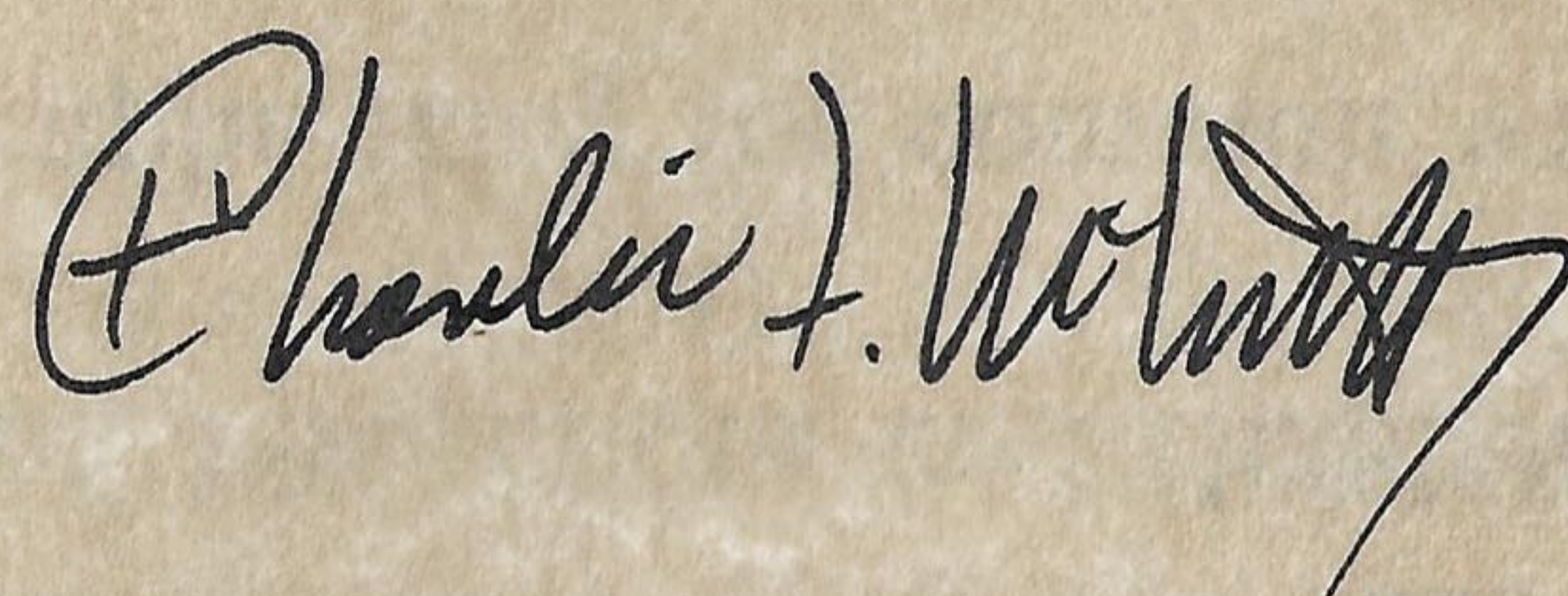
Therefore, relying on the faithful love of the Triune God, we commit ourselves to celebrate the unity already achieved through years of Lutheran-Anglican-Roman Catholic conversations and to strengthen the visible unity of the Body of Christ in Central Pennsylvania.

We hereby call into covenant our respective Synods and Dioceses, committing ourselves to leading the church to greater unity and by urging our clergy and parishes to:

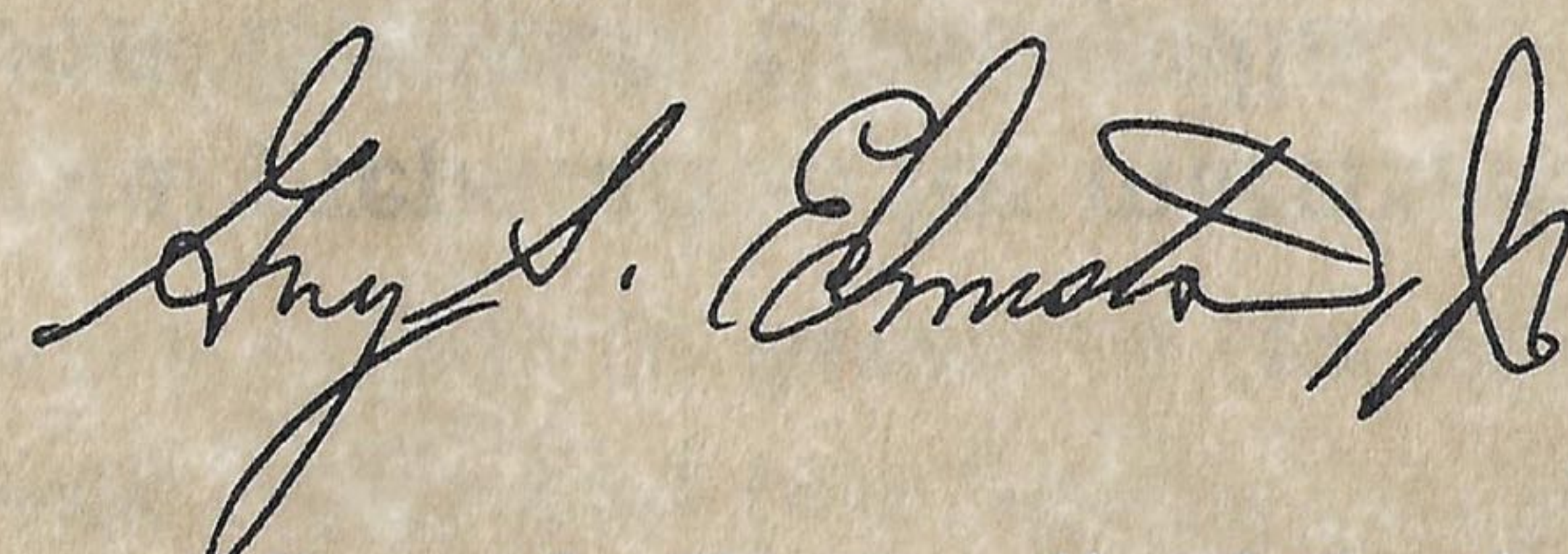
1. Pray for each other and the unity of the whole church, particularly at the Sunday liturgy;
2. Sponsor seasonal prayer services, especially during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity;
3. Engage in shared lectionary studies;
4. Promote pulpit exchanges in non-eucharistic liturgies and extend other invitations in accord with the respective guidelines of each tradition;
5. Cooperate in the provision of pre-marital preparation for marriages in accordance with the “Guidelines for Mixed Marriage Celebration and Preparation Between Episcopalians, Lutherans, and Roman Catholics in Central Pennsylvania” issued in 1987;
6. Promote covenants among congregations, institutions and chaplaincies;
7. Study the traditions of our churches, emphasizing the common witness increasingly made possible as the result of our theological dialogues;
8. Sponsor shared retreats and formational events for clergy and parish leadership;
9. Collaborate at both the local and judicatory levels on issues of evangelization, justice and social concerns;
10. Work whenever possible to support and facilitate future ecumenical efforts among all Christians.

To further the goals of this covenant, we will establish a Covenant Committee to lead in actualizing this covenant, annually review it; and annually report to our respective dioceses and synods; and provide for an annual celebration of this covenant with a liturgy of renewal presided over by the bishops.

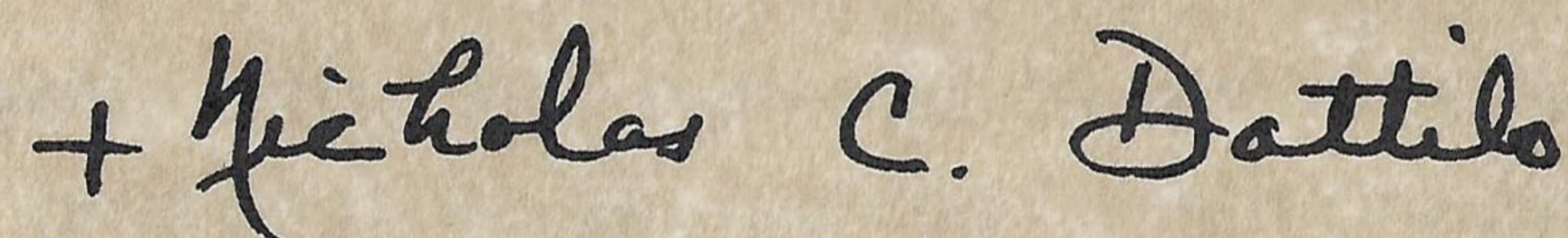
May the Holy Spirit, who has brought us to this moment of covenanting, bring us to ever deepening levels of unity. To this end we affix our names in behalf of our respective judicatories on this twenty-third day of May in the year of our Lord, Nineteen Hundred Ninety Three.



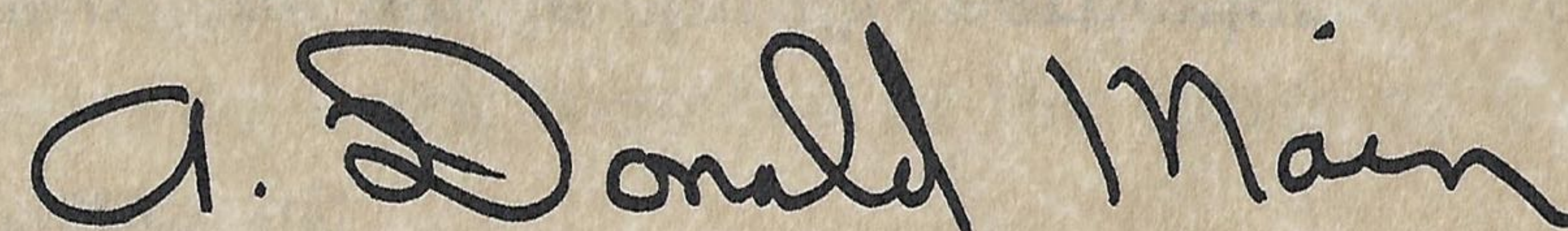
The Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania



The Lower Susquehanna Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



The Roman Catholic Diocese of Harrisburg



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